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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 7, 2002**

For Information Contact Public Affairs  
Mike Johns (602) 514-7566

# **Chandler Felon Caught with 114 Pieces of Stolen Mail and a Sawed Off Shotgun Sentenced to 7 Years in Prison**

**PHOENIX, ARIZONA** -- The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona, announced today that BERT LESLIE SZABO, JR., age 26, of Chandler, Arizona, was sentenced today to a total of 7 years in prison, by United States District Judge Roslyn O. Silver, in Phoenix, Arizona. The defendant received a sentence of 7 years imprisonment for Felon In Possession of a Firearm in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1) and 5 years of imprisonment (the statutory maximum), concurrent, for Possession of Stolen Mail in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1708. Assistant U.S. Attorney Frederick A. Battista stated "The combined cooperative efforts of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, ATF and the Phoenix Police Department have lead to an armed felon getting the maximum sentence of imprisonment for possession of stolen mail."

The defendant entered guilty pleas to the federal charges on June 29, 2001. Szabo's offenses involved the following facts. On December 14, 1998, Szabo was caught by the Phoenix Police Department driving a Stolen Chevrolet Blazer and arrested. During a search of the vehicle, a Phoenix police officer found a loaded Remington, Model 870, 16 gauge sawed-off shotgun along with 114 pieces of mail. The mail had been stolen from 42 different victims. Many pieces of the mail contained checks and Szabo's fingerprints. After the defendant's arrest, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and ATF were called in to

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follow-up on the stolen mail and sawed-off shotgun. Szabo's criminal record includes a November 2, 1995, felony conviction in Maricopa County Superior Court for armed robbery.

A conviction for Felon in Possession a Firearm in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1) is punishable by up to ten (10) years of imprisonment, a maximum fine of \$250,000.00 or both. A conviction for Possession of Stolen Mail in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1708 is punishable by up to five (5) years of imprisonment, a maximum fine of \$250,000.00 or both. The defendant was in custody at the time of today's sentencing and will serve his federal sentence concurrently with a related State of Arizona conviction for vehicle theft. The investigation in this case was conducted by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and Phoenix Police Department.

The prosecution was handled by Frederick A. Battista, Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix, Arizona.

CASE NUMBER: CR-99-591-PHX-ROS  
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